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## **Overview**

In 1991, the Texas Legislature established the Texas Automobile Theft Prevention Authority (ATPA) to create a statewide effort for the reduction of vehicle theft to address the growing auto theft problem in Texas.

In 2007, the Texas Legislature added auto burglary to ATPA's scope. The resulting agency, known as the Automobile Burglary and Theft Prevention Authority (ABTPA), is currently charged with assessing the motor vehicle burglary and theft problem in Texas, analyzing methods to reduce the issue, and providing financial support to combat those problems.

ABTPA functions as the lead organization in a statewide network of law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, insurance industry representatives, local tax assessor-collectors, community organizations, and concerned citizen groups.

## Accomplishments

Working together with law enforcement, insurance industry representatives, and community stakeholders, ABTPA has many accomplishments since 1991 which include:

- Awarding over 570 Automobile Burglary & Theft Prevention grants totaling \$239 million to cities, counties and regions around the state.
- Reducing vehicle theft by 70% in Texas.
- Recovering 1,640,605 vehicles that amount to an estimated recovered value of over \$11.6 billion.

While ABTPA has had many impressive accomplishments in its 20 years, there are still auto theft and burglary challenges facing Texas. ABTPA plans to meet these challenges to protect Texans from becoming auto burglary and theft victims.

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### | 1991 | 1992 | 1994 | 1995 | 1996 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 |

### **Auto Theft Rate**

By statute, the ABTPA must provide the vehicle theft rate on April 1 of each year to the Lt. Governor and the Speaker of the House. The following rates were reported during the years 1991-2009:



These rates are calculated according to the Uniform Crime Report figures provided by the Texas Department of Public Safety (TxDPS). Calculations are made by dividing the number of stolen vehicles reported annually by the number of registered vehicles in the state per year multiplied by 100,000. Based on this formula, the auto theft rate has been reduced by 69.9% since the establishment of ABTPA. The 2009 theft rate was 309.2 motor vehicle thefts for every 100,000 persons.

## ABTPA Mission

The mission of ABTPA is to:

- Provide financial support to law enforcement agencies for economic motor vehicle theft and burglary enforcement teams;
- Provide financial support to law enforcement agencies; local prosecutors; judicial agencies; and neighborhood, community, business, and non-profit organizations for programs designed to reduce the incidence of economic motor vehicle theft and burglary;
- Conduct educational programs designed to inform automobile owners of methods of preventing vehicle burglary and theft;
- Provide equipment, for experimental purposes, to assist vehicle owners in preventing motor vehicle burglary or theft;
- Fund a statewide vehicle theft recovery registration program; and
- Establish a uniform program to prevent stolen motor vehicles from entering Mexico.

### **ABTPA Grantees**

ABTPA monies are awarded to various projects that fulfill the ABTPA's mission. Project grants are awarded for one fiscal year, September 1 through August 31. State agencies, local general purpose units of government, independent school districts, non-profit and for-profit organizations are eligible to submit applications for funding. The following project categories have been established as eligible for ABTPA grant funding:

### **Law Enforcement, Detection, and Apprehension**

Conduct pro-active patrols to search for and recover stolen vehicles, participate with narcotics agencies to recover stolen vehicles and property, and investigate known repeat offenders involved in auto theft, burglary, or fraud..

### **Border Enforcement**

Instrumental part of Homeland Security to protect our borders and to prevent stolen vehicles from crossing the border from an inbound and outbound perspective.

### **Public Awareness and Crime Prevention**

Educate task forces and citizens about auto theft and burglary prevention efforts in their locality by law enforcement agencies as well as to provide tips to citizens on how not to become victims of auto theft and burglary.

### **Anti-Theft Devices and Registration**

Conduct document investigations to identify, apprehend and prosecute those who sell fraudulent documents to register or renew vehicle registration. They may also collect statistical data for other agencies for reporting and or educational purposes.

### **Statewide Training Enforcement and Detection**

Provide training, sharing of information for stolen vehicles, and locate and issue warrants for known repeat offenders involved in auto theft, burglary, or fraud.

1990s



# Auto Theft Problems in the Early 1990s

Auto theft was at an all time high in the early 1990s both nationally and in Texas. The 1991 Texas Uniform Crime Report (UCR) reported 163,837 auto thefts and the economic loss of stolen vehicles for Texas was \$849 million with an average loss of \$5,189 per motor vehicle.



## **Creating the Texas Automobile Theft Prevention Authority**

In June 1991, the 72nd Texas Legislature addressed the growing auto theft issue by passing legislation to establish the Texas Automobile Theft Prevention Authority (ATPA), creating a statewide effort for the reduction of vehicle theft. ATPA's enabling legislation, House Bill 640:

- Adds Article 4413(37) to Title 70, Texas Civil Statutes
- Identifies the composition of the ATPA Board of Directors
- Allows ATPA to adopt rules (Texas Register)
- Requires ATPA to report on ATPA activities to the Lt. Governor and Speaker of the House no later than April 1st of each year
- Mandates ATPA to develop and implement a plan of operation
- Establishes the ATPA fund
- Establishes criteria for the programs eligible for funding
- Mandates ATPA to develop a statewide vehicle registration program

### **ATPA Funding**

The Texas ATPA funding source is provided by a \$1 fee on each insured automobile each year.

The fee is assessed to insurance companies providing vehicle insurance in Texas and is collected by the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts for the ATPA.

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### **ATPA Board**

The Governor of Texas appoints six individuals to serve as the Texas ATPA Board. The Board members include two law enforcement representatives, two consumer representatives and two insurance representatives. The seventh member is the executive director of the TxDPS, who serves ex-officio. Board members are appointed to serve staggered six year terms.

The Board makes all decisions regarding the awarding of grant funds. It may also actively solicit applications for new programs. The scope of the auto theft problems in a given area will weigh in the Authority's decision to grant funds.

## Addressing Border Issues

After the official appointment of the ATPA Board of Directors in early 1992, and following the creation

of the basic documents for operation, different strategies were looked at to reduce auto theft in Texas to fit its diverse population. Approaches and solutions to theft in the areas in North Texas were known to be quite different from strategies needed to combat theft along the Texas-Mexico border.

The Board determined that a special committee should be established to identify the problems and possible solutions to border theft. The Border

Solutions Committee (BSC) was established under Texas Administrative Code Rule §57.53¹ to assist the ATPA in promoting the reduction of vehicle theft in Texas and the bordering States of Mexico and in establishing more effective cooperation, communication and understanding between the two countries' participating agencies. The BSC selected a chairman and conducted its first meeting in El Paso in the fall of 1992. The BSC was initially comprised of representatives from the TxDPS, General Services Administration, National Insurance Crime Bureau, El Paso Police Department, El Paso Sheriff's Office, TxDOT, Allstate Insurance Company, Mexico-Texas Bridge Owner's Association and the Texas Attorney General's Office.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>Texas Administrative Code Title 43, Part 3, Chapter 57



As the unique problems of the border were identified and goals and objectives were set, broader representation was required so that all governmental and private entities that might be affected by recommended solutions springing from the committee work would be considered in the drafting of those recommendations.

## Establishing the Help End Auto Theft (H.E.A.T.) Program

The Help End Auto Theft (H.E.A.T.) program began in November 1993 as a voluntary statewide vehicle registration program designed as a theft deterrent. Vehicle owners can sign an agreement with any participating law enforcement agency to stop the owner's vehicle anywhere in Texas during the period 1:00 a.m. - 5:00 a.m., to verify ownership. Owners can grant additional authority at the time of registration to have their vehicle stopped any time if it is being driven from Texas into Mexico. The H.E.A.T. program is administrated by the TxDPS.

## "Watch Your Car" Public Awareness Campaign Launches

Much of the reduction in Texas' automobile theft rates is attributed to "Watch Your Car", ATPA's first public awareness and education program. "Watch Your Car" is a statewide multi-media campaign consisting of TV and radio public service announcements (PSAs), billboards, brochures, posters, and annual reports.

The "Watch Your Car" campaign has won a variety of awards since its inception in

1994. State, national, and international honors include 7 Tellys, the Texas Public Relations Society of
America's Silver Spur Award, and 3 Best of Texas from the Texas Public Relations Association. It
was also a finalist at the New York Film Festival for the PSAs. The "Watch Your Car" campaign has
also won several awards for its brochures, billboards, annual reports, and posters.

ABTPA makes these materials available to grantees, crime prevention officers, and organizations to reinforce the public's awareness concerning auto theft.

Because of its effectiveness, the "Watch Your Car" campaign has become a model for 13 other states. British Columbia and Canada.





## June 1991

The 72nd Texas Legislature addressed the growing auto theft issue by passing legislation to establish the Texas Automobile Theft Prevention Authority (ATPA), creating a statewide effort for the reduction of vehicle theft in the Office of the Governor.

## **Early** 1992

The ATPA Board of Directors was officially appointed and created the basic documents for operation.

### Fall 1992

AURO THEFT RATES IN

The Border Solutions Committee (BSC) selected its chairman and conducted its first meeting in El Paso. The BSC was established to assist in promoting the reduction of vehicle theft in Texas and the bordering States of Mexico and in establishing more effective cooperation, communication and understanding between the two countries' participating agencies.



November 1993

The Help End Auto Theft (H.E.A.T.) program began as a voluntary statewide vehicle registration program designed as a theft deterrent.

### **T** 1994

The statewide ATPA "Watch Your Car"
multi-media, award-winning
campaign launched. Because
of its effectiveness,
the "Watch Your Car"
campaign has become a
model for 13 other states,
British Columbia and Canada.

### 1994

The Border Auto Theft Information Center (B.A.T.I.C.), part of the TxDPS, was created exclusively to answer inquiries from Mexican and U.S. law enforcement agencies regarding stolen vehicles.

### 1995

The Reduce Auto Theft in Texas (R.A.T.T.) public awareness program was created to coordinate and support public awareness efforts of ATPA and its grantees.

### April 1995

The ATPA Board created the Insurance Fraud Advisory Committee to assist the ATPA in promoting the reduction of motor vehicle theft in Texas and in promoting communication and cooperation in Texas on mutual opportunities to protect against motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud.

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Auto theft was at an all time high in the early 1990s both nationally and in Texas. In 1991, there were 163,837 auto thefts in Texas with an economic loss of \$849 million.





### 1997

ATPA loses its dedicated funding and is moved into the appropriated funding category.

### 1997

ATPA becomes part of the Texas Department of Transportation.

### 1998

October is designated as Auto Theft Awareness Month, which coincides with National Crime Prevention Month. July is now Texas "Watch Your Car" Month, a move done to designate a separate month concentrating on only auto burglary and theft prevention awareness.

### September 2000

The Border Partners Program was established as an initiative of the Border Solutions Committee. The program combats auto theft along the El Paso-Juarez border by creating a cooperative effort in repatriation of stolen vehicles to auto theft victims on both sides of the border.

### September 2001

ATPA funded two tax assessor collector grants as pilot programs in Hidalgo and Cameron counties. The grants focused on deterring the registration of vehicles by investigating fraudulent documents, including titles, bills of sale, insurance cards, and vehicle registration. They also inspect all vehicles to ensure accurate Vehicle Identification Numbers (VIN) and issue citations.







The Insurance Fraud Task Force was created in Dallas County to investigate auto insurance fraud cases in the Dallas area.

ABTPA's "You Hold the Key" public awareness campaign launched and was designed to increase ounderstanding among vehicle owners that leaving doors unlocked and keys in the vehicles could make them unsuspecting accomplices in other serious crimes.

The mission of ATPA is expanded to include emphasis on vehicle burglary in addition to theft, therefore changing ATPA's name to the Texas Auto Burglary and Theft Prevention Authority.



The Auto Burglary and Theft Prevention Authority launched the "You Are Being Shadowed" public awareness campaign to focus on the idea that wherever Texans go. car thieves are there to burglarize and/or steal their vehicles.

### Fall 2009

The 81st Texas Legislature transferred four TxDOT divisions, including ABTPA, from TxDOT to the newly created state agency, the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles (TxDMV). ABTPA's headquarters are in Austin, Texas, and a five-member staff continues to administer agency operations.

The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office awards the trademarks for "Watch Your Car" and "You Hold the Key" to ABTPA.



## Border Auto Theft Information Center (B.A.T.I.C.)

The Border Auto Theft Information Center (B.A.T.I.C.), part of the TxDPS, was created in 1994 exclusively to answer inquiries from Mexican and U.S. law enforcement agencies regarding stolen vehicles.

It has dramatically improved the recovery rate of stolen vehicles returned to the United States from Mexico. Prior to the creation of B.A.T.I.C., U.S. law enforcement had recovered less than 500 stolen vehicles from Mexico. With the assistance of law enforcement, the task forces along the border and B.A.T.I.C., an average of 2,600 stolen vehicles are recovered annually.

The use of B.A.T.I.C. is becoming more and more evident in the United States and remains the only program of its kind. Over the last few years, it has evolved to keep up with new techniques in discovering stolen vehicles to better assist law enforcement officers on both sides of the border.

## Reduce Auto Theft in Texas (R.A.T.T.) Public Awareness Program

In 1995, the Reduce Auto Theft in Texas (R.A.T.T.) public awareness program was created to coordinate and support public awareness efforts of ATPA and its grantees. It serves as a one-stop shop for public awareness and auto theft education, disseminates and tracks grantees' public

awareness activities, and maintains the 800-CAR-WATCH hotline. It is the only statewide auto theft awareness and prevention grant. R.A.T.T. has won multiple community service awards, including the Texas Crime Prevention Association's "Outstanding Crime Prevention Program" award and the National Association of Town Watch's "National Night Out All-Star" award and the 2007 International Association of Chiefs of Police Vehicle Theft Award of Merit.



## Insurance Fraud Advisory & Grantee Advisory Committees Created

The ATPA Board created the Insurance Fraud Advisory Committee in April of 1995 under Texas Administrative Code Rule §57.55² to assist the ATPA in promoting the reduction of motor vehicle theft in Texas and in promoting communication and cooperation in Texas on mutual opportunities to protect against motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud. The committee considers issues relating to insurance fraud and its connection to the theft of motor vehicles in Texas, and recommends solutions to the ATPA, and encourages grantees to seek funding for insurance fraud projects. The committee further considers and recommends ways in which the insurance industry might assist the ATPA in raising public awareness of insurance fraud and its economic impact.

The Grantee Advisory Committee (GAC) was established by the Texas Administrative Code Rule §57.54³ to serve as a "voice" for grantees. Members are appointed by the Board for one year terms.

The GAC considers matters of concern for ATPA and grantees, capitalizes on the knowledge and experience of law enforcement, and develops auto theft reduction initiatives.

## Significant Legislative Changes Impacting ATPA

In 1995, during the 74<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session, the Texas Legislature passed House Bill 2845. This legislation:

- Amends Article 4413(37)
- Establishes the ATPA in the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT)
- Gives the ATPA authority to enter into contracts in its own name and behalf
- Provides the ATPA Board the power to refund and make determinations regarding sufficiency of payments made by an insurer
- Allows ATPA to make determinations regarding sufficiency of payments made in accordance with procedures set forth in published rules
- Changes the annual collection of \$1 assessment fee per insured vehicle from February 1<sup>st</sup> to March 1<sup>st</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup>Texas Administrative Code Title 43, Part 3, Chapter 57

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup>Texas Administrative Code Title 43, Part 3, Chapter 57



In 1997, during the 75<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session, the Texas Legislature passed House Bill 1387. This legislation:

- Amends to Article 4413(37)
- Further defines ATPA's relationship with TxDOT
- Identifies eligibility and training requirements for ATPA Board members
- Allows the selection of Board Chair to be made by Governor and elected by Board member
- Defines ATPA staff as TxDOT staff
- Requires services for the ATPA provided only by or through TxDOT
- Changes Automobile Theft Prevention Fund to Appropriated Funds
- Caps administrative costs at 8% of total expenditures during any fiscal year



- Changes payment and collection of ATPA assessment fee from once a year to twice a year (March 1st for policies issued, delivered, or renewed July 1st through December 31st of the previous calendar year; August 1st for policies issued, delivered, or renewed January 1st through June 30th of current year)
- Specifies that requests for refund or determination of the sufficiency of payments made by insurers must be made no later than six months after the fees were paid

## "Watch Your Car" Day Proclamation

In October 1997, the Governor of Texas signed a "Watch Your Car" Day public awareness proclamation to advocate the unprecedented statewide theft reduction that achieved the decrease in economic loss originally envisioned by the Texas Legislature. October 1998 was designated as Auto Theft Awareness Month which coincides with National Crime Prevention Month. July is now Texas "Watch Your Car" Month to designate a separate month concentrating on only auto burglary and theft prevention awareness.



2000s

## Border Partners Program Established in El Paso

The Border Partners Program was established in September 2000 as an initiative of the Border Solutions Committee. The program combats auto theft along the El Paso-Juarez border by creating a cooperative effort in repatriation of stolen vehicles to auto theft victims on both sides of the border.



Border Partners assists auto theft victims and manages data in the computer network which links several bordering states to recover vehicles from Mexico.

Authorities on both sides of the border access the same database of stolen vehicles and jointly investigate and prosecute auto thieves.

## Tax Assessor Collector Grant Pilot Programs Launch

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In September 2001, ATPA funded two tax assessor collector grants as pilot programs in Hidalgo and Cameron counties. The grants focused on deterring the registration of vehicles by investigating fraudulent documents, including titles, bills of sale, insurance cards, and vehicle registration. They also inspect all vehicles to ensure accurate Vehicle Identification Numbers (VIN) and issue citations.

## **Insurance Fraud Task Force Established**

The Insurance Fraud Task Force was created in the North Texas Auto Theft Task Force in Dallas County to investigate auto theft insurance fraud cases in the Dallas area. It is the only law enforcement entity in Texas dedicated specifically to investigate and prosecute single claim auto theft insurance fraud. The investigators who work in this area have filed cases for prosecution which have reduced the dollar cost for these filings.

## FY 2004 and FY 2005 Budget Reductions Impact Grants

At the beginning of the 78th Texas Legislative Session, there was clear sentiment among some legislators to eliminate the ATPA due to budget constraints. Due to the hard work of ATPA and its grantees, ATPA survived but had a drastic 34% biennium budget reduction for FY 2004 and FY 2005.



### | 1995 | 1996 | 1996 | 1996 | 1997 | 1997 | 1997 | 1997 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 | 1998 |

## **Auto Burglary Added to Scope**

The 80th Legislature passed two significant bills affecting ATPA in 2007.

### House Bill 1887:

- Expands the mission of ATPA to include emphasis on vehicle burglary in addition to theft
- Renames ATPA to the Texas Auto Burglary and Theft Prevention Authority (ABTPA).
- Requires offenders to serve a minimum term of six months in county jail or one year probation on their second offense. Furthermore, after the third offense of burglary of a motor vehicle, the punishment will be enhanced to a state jail felony.

### House Bill 3225:

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Replaces the term "automobile" with "motor vehicle" throughout the statute relating to the ABTPA.
 This change will make Texas statutes consistent with the Uniform Crime Report and provide more flexibility to law enforcement agents in preventing motor vehicle burglary and theft in our state.

## "You Hold the Key" Campaign Reminds Texans to Take Their Keys

ABTPA's "You Hold the Key" public awareness campaign, launched in 2007, is designed to increase understanding among vehicle owners that leaving doors unlocked and keys in the vehicles could make them unsuspecting accomplices in other serious crimes. The campaign reminds drivers that stolen vehicles can be used as a "gateway" to the commission of other crimes, including drug manufacturing, drug smuggling, weapons trafficking, burglary, robbery, and even international terrorism.



## "You Are Being Shadowed" Campaign Focuses on Auto Burglary

In 2009, the ABTPA launched the "You Are Being Shadowed" public awareness campaign to focus on the idea that wherever Texans go, car thieves are there to burglarize and/or steal their vehicles. The secondary messages of the campaign are tailored toward specific regions: border, urban, and



rural. The campaign includes bilingual regional radio PSAs, a: 15 animated PSA, four video news releases, and print materials (newspaper, outdoor, internet, poster, and parking lot signage artwork).

## **ABTPA** Moves to the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles

The ABTPA was an office within the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT). As of September 1, 2009, House Bill 3097 transferred four TxDOT divisions, including ABTPA, from TxDOT to the newly created state agency, the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles (TxDMV). ABTPA's headquarters are in Austin, Texas, and a five-member staff administers agency operations.



## ABTPA Awarded "Watch Your Car" ® and "You Hold the Key" ® Service Marks

The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office awards the trademarks for "Watch Your Car" and "You Hold the Key" to ABTPA in 2010.

## **Looking Forward**

The ABTPA Board takes pride in the success of statewide auto theft investigative and prevention efforts and commends the commitment and dedication of the ABTPA staff and grantees. In the years since ABTPA was created, the auto theft rate in Texas has decreased dramatically. The Texas ABTPA will strive to find even more effective ways in reducing vehicle theft and burglary in Texas and assisting other states and countries to enhance their auto theft programs. In accomplishing this, ABTPA will not only utilize new technological advancements, increased public awareness and education programs, but also strengthen cooperative initiatives between state, national and international law enforcement agencies.

As vehicle burglary and theft trends change over time, so do the strategies we use to combat those crimes. Our staff, grantees, task forces, and stakeholders work very hard to combat crimes that not only present personal risk and possible injury to law enforcement officers, but place an extreme economic burden on vehicle owners, taxpayers, insurance companies, and the State of Texas. And we will continue to be the "Authority" on the business of auto burglary and theft.

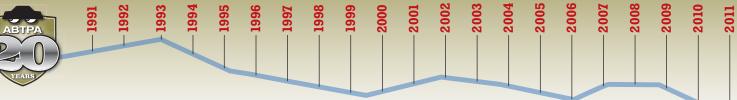


## **ABTPA Board Members and Directors**

## **Past Board Members**

Board Member	Year Appointed	Represented	City
Mr. Dale R. Green*	1992	Consumer	Fort Worth
Lt. Mart C. Hanna	1992	Law Enforcement	Houston
Ms. Mateele Rittgers	1992	Consumer	El Paso
Chief Victor Rodriguez	1992	Law Enforcement	McAllen
Mr. Robert L. Springer	1992	Insurance	The Woodlands
Mr. Charles Wirth*	1992	Insurance	Austin
Col. James Wilson Mr. Bill Pruitt	1992	Ex-Offico/TxDPS	Austin
Deputy Chief W. Troy McClain	1995	Law Enforcement	Dallas
Ms. Patricia J. Williams*	1995	Consumer	Weatherford
Chief of Police Jim Scheopne	1995	Law Enforcement	Harlingen
Mr. Phil Donovan	1996	Insurance	Houston
Ms. Pat Ayala	1997	Consumer	El Paso
Asst. Chief Mac Tristan*	1997	Law Enforcement	Carrollton
Col. Dudley Thomas Mr. Tommy Davis	1998	Ex-Offico/TxDPS	Austin
Mr. Michael F. Gerik*	1999	Insurance	Waco
Chief of Police Al A. Philippus	1999	Law Enforcement	San Antonio
Col. Tommy Davis Mr. Mike Scott	2001	Ex-Offico/TxDPS	Austin
Col. Tommy Davis Mr. Marshall Caskey	2002	Ex-Offico/TxDPS	Austin
Mr. Ernest C. Garcia	2002	Consumer	Austin
Mr. Borris Lee Miles	2002	Insurance	Houston
Ms. Denise Anaya Saenz	2003	Consumer	El Paso





Col. Tommy Davis 2004 Ex-Offico/TxDPS A	Col. Tommy	/ Davis	2004	Ex-Offico/TxDPS	Austin
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Mr. Kent Mawyer

Ms. Cindy Ramos-Davidson 2006 Consumer El Paso

2006 Law Enforcement Dallas Cpt. Jason Hartgraves

Col. Tommy Davis 2007 Ex-Offico/TxDPS Austin

Commander Jesse Flores

## Current ABTPA Board of Directors

(from left to right) Chief Carlos Garcia ABTPA Chairman of the Board 2002 - Law Enforcement Representative • Brownsville

Mr. Rich Watson 2007 - Insurance Representative · Austin

Major Jesse Flores c/o Mr. Steven McCraw 2007 - Ex-Officio/Texas Department of Public Safety • Austin

Ms. Margaret "Jerry" Wright 2008 - Consumer Representative • El Paso

Ms. Linda Kinney 2008 - Consumer Representative • Austin

Mr. Ken Ross 2008 - Insurance Representative • Houston

Sgt. Mark H. Wilson 2009 - Law Enforcement Representative • Fort Worth

















## **ABTPA Directors**

Ms. Linda Young 1991-1996

Ms. Deanna Citerne 1996-1997

Mr. Agustin (Gus) De La Rosa 1997-2001

Ms. Susan Sampson 2001-2008

Mr. Charles Caldwell 2008-present

<sup>\*</sup> denotes past Board Chair. Italics denotes original Board members

